

Nitesh Mathur

Dr. Mintz

Honors Plan

26 January 2018

## India's Survival and Evolution as a Complex Modern Nation-State – Part II

### The Wars That Shaped India

In the first section of “India’s Survival and Evolution as a Complex Modern Nation-State,” the ideas that lead to the formation of the Republic of India as well as its early successes and failures were discussed. Designing a single Constitution to safeguard multiple interests, integrating the quasi-independent princely states, establishing democratic institutions amidst chaotic civil unrest, and initiating economic progress post-colonial rule provided a solid platform for India to build a stable nation. In this segment, we will discuss the external conflicts that shaped India. This includes wars with China and Pakistan as well as the Bangladesh Liberation Struggle. Although Jawaharlal Nehru was India’s early political catalyst, Indira Gandhi provided India its defining moments. Nehru’s policy of non-alignment had asserted India’s position in the post-World War II Cold War era. While treaties like NATO and the Warsaw Pact aligned countries toward either the United States or the USSR, Nehru and other major leaders led the non-aligned movement with newly independent Asian and African countries. This was evident in the 1955 Bandung Conference, where half of the world’s population joined together and adopted a 10-point declaration, proclaiming peace and cooperation. While Pakistan signed SEATO and aligned with the United States, India remained neutral. These alliances would have an immense impact on India’s external challenges later on. Altogether, the exposure of India’s vulnerability in the 1962 China War, the morale provided by Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri

in the 1965 Indo-Pak War, the victory against Pakistan in 1971, and the subsequent creation of Bangladesh not only shaped India's foreign policy, but also its national identity.

In the first twenty five years of its nationhood, India went to war on four occasions with its neighbors, thrice with Pakistan and once with China. The first of these conflicts, discussed in the previous part of the essay series, was the 1947-48 Kashmir War between India and Pakistan which resulted in a ceasefire that left both countries administering part of the state. While India focused mainly on securing the western front, another conflict was brewing with China. In 1954, India and China signed "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence" and established mutual trade. The popular phrase "Hindi-Chini bhai bhai" (Indian and Chinese are brothers) was coined after this agreement. Yet, in the next couple of years, tensions began to rise due to border dispute. In 1914, the McMahon line was established between the two nations and after independence, India claimed it to be the de facto border. China asserted that the McMahon line was "'a product of the British policy of aggression against the Tibet Region of China' and 'it cannot be considered legal'" (Guha 310). From 1954-58, several different maps were published in both countries claiming areas of Ladakh, Aksai Chin (in Kashmir), and NEFA (North East Frontier Agency). In addition, China began building a road in Aksai China, providing another roadway from China to Tibet. Nehru and Premier Chou En-Lai exchanged several letters in these years but no resolution was settled upon. At the same time, the Khampa rebellion had caused an influx of Chinese troops in the Tibetan region as a response to the uprising. In early 1959, an Indian government memo was released "containing five years of correspondence with its Chinese counterpart," which highlighted "trifling disputes, occasioned by straying armed patrols into territory claimed by the other side, larger questions about the status of the border in the west and the east, and disagreements about the meaning of the rebellion in Tibet" (313). In March 1959, the Dalai

Lama secretly arrived in India, where he would eventually be granted political asylum. By this time, the tensions had risen beyond control and a possible conflict between the two populous nations was on the horizon. The root of this border conflict “rested in part on the legacy of imperialism” (317). While British imperialism had secured India a border with the McMahon line, Chinese imperialism had claimed the Tibetan region; in either case, “both claimed sovereignty over territory acquired by less than legitimate means” (317). This border issue would push the seemingly cordial relationship between the two countries in the early 1950s to the brink of war by 1960.

It was evident that India was far less prepared than their counterparts in the ensuing conflict. An internal conflict between the defense minister and the chief of staff further distracted the department of defense. Starting in 1959, in both the disputed territories, the “Chinese and Indians had played cat and mouse, sending troops to fill up no-man’s land, clashing here and there, while their leaders exchanged letters and occasionally even met” (335). What was a border conflict thus far broke out into real warfare on the night of October 19-20. “The Indians were ‘taken by surprise’ as the Chinese quickly overran many positions” (336). After a month of skirmishes, 1,383 Indian soldiers had been killed, 3,968 were taken prisoner; and 1,696 were missing (359). China gained the Aksai Chin area in Kashmir and a ceasefire line, now known as the ‘Line of Actual Control,’ was established. The war left India with a low morale and “underlined Chinese superiority in ‘arms, communications, strategy, logistics, and planning’” (339). Two newly independent nations with long histories and cultures had collided, and China emerged victorious. This conflict can be summarized as a “clash of national myths, national egos, national insecurities, and—ultimately and inevitably—national armies” (340).

The war exposed India's military weakness and Nehru's leadership was broadly criticized. Nehru's waning power was evident and finally on 27 May, 1964, he passed away.

A few days later, Lal Bahadur Shastri was sworn in as the next prime minister. While he was just beginning to understand the weight of the prime minister's office, in 1965, "a conflict broke out over the Rann of Kachchh, a salt march claimed by both Pakistan and India" (398). Twelve years ago, in 1953, the leader of secular Kashmiris, Sheikh Abdullah, was jailed by India. His imprisonment, Nehru's death, and the Kachchh conflict embedded a thought in Ayub Khan's mind, Pakistan's President then. The idea was to "foment an insurrection in the Indian part of Kashmir, leading either to war, ending with the state being annexed to Pakistan, or to international arbitration, with the same result" (398). Subsequently, Pakistan launched Operation Gibraltar, which was named after the Moorish Muslims' victory in Spain in 1492. In August 1965, "a group of irregulars" crossed the 1948 ceasefire line and by September 1<sup>st</sup>, the official invasion by the Pakistan army began (399). The majority of this conflict took place in the western front along Punjab, Kashmir, and Sindh. At the end of the two-month long war, both India and Pakistan "claimed victory, exaggerate[ed] the enemy's losses and underestimate[ed] its own" (400). Pakistan lost about 3,000-5,000 men, 250 tanks, and fifty aircraft were, while approximately 4,000-6,000 men, 300 tanks, and fifty aircraft were attributed to India's losses. In larger context, this war can be declared a draw although "with their much larger population, and bigger army, the Indians were better able to absorb these losses" (400).

Although the 1965 war was not necessarily an outright military victory, it was a moral victory for India nevertheless. There was "an unmistakably religious idiom associated with an operation initiated by Pakistani Muslims on behalf of their brethren in Kashmir" (401). In retrospect, we can see that this was definitely not the case; on the contrary, the "attack united the

Indians” (401). Kashmiris generally supported the Indian Army, a Muslim soldier won India’s highest military honor, the Param Vir Chakra, another Muslim—named ironically, Ayub Khan “knocked out a couple of Pakistani tanks,” and Muslim intellectuals and divines across India “condemn[ed] Pakistan and express[ed] their desire to sacrifice their lives for the motherland” (401). While the 1962 loss occurred in “wet and slippery Himalaya, this was terrain the Indians knew much better” (401). In addition, after the 1962 loss, the Indian Army had been better equipped and prepared. Another positive was PM Shastri’s leadership during the war. He was decisive, “swift to take advice of his commanders and order the strike across the Punjab border, (In a comparable situation, in 1962, Nehru had refused to call in the air force to relieve the pressure,)” and had “coined the slogan *Jai Jawan Jai Kisan* (salute the soldier and the humble farmer)” to garner popular support (401). India’s agriculture production was low in recent years and his administration focused budget allocations on agricultural research, fertilizer production, and reform that eventually helped revive India’s agriculture sector. In 1966, the Soviet Union arbitrated a settlement between India and Pakistan. “After a week of hard bargaining each side agreed to give up what it most prized—international arbitration of the Kashmir dispute for Pakistan; the retention of key posts captured during the war for India. The ‘Tashkent agreement’ mandated the withdrawal of forces to the positions they held before 5 August 1965, the orderly transfer of prisoners of war, the resumption of diplomatic relations, and the disavowal of force to settle future disputes” (404). On 10 January, 1966, the Tashkent Declaration was signed but later that night, Shastri passed away with a cardiac arrest. Although Shastri lead the country only for a couple of years, he leaves a rich legacy. He provided the Indian citizens “a mood—a new steeliness and sense of national unity” compared to the “disillusion, drift, fear, and dismay” in 1962 (404). The war with China had “brought the country to a state of near collapse,” but in

1965, “everything worked—the trains ran, the army held fast, there was no communal rioting” (404). Although Shastri departed from Nehru in terms of his war leadership, he agreed with the secular vision of his predecessor. He exemplified India’s secularism in a public meeting after a BBC report had claimed that since “Shastri is a Hindu he is ready for war with Pakistan” (402). In reply, he exclaimed that “while he was a Hindu, ‘Mir Mushtaq who is presiding over this meeting is a Muslim, Mr. Frank Anthony who has addressed you is a Christian. There are also Sikhs and Parsis here. The unique thing about our country is that we have Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, and people of all other religions. We have temples and mosques, gurdwaras and churches. But we do not bring this all into politics... This is the difference between India and Pakistan. Whereas Pakistan proclaims herself to be an Islamic State and uses religion as a political factor, we Indians have the freedom to follow whatever religion we may choose [and] worship in any way we please. So far as politics is concerned, each of us is as much an Indian as the other” (402). All in all, Shastri’s decisive leadership in 1965 helped India recover from the dreadful loss in 1962.

While the 1962 China loss was a catastrophe and 1965 Indo-Pak War a moral victory, the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War established India as a regional power. After Shastri’s death, Indira Gandhi, Nehru’s daughter, became Prime Minister. She had a relatively quiet first term from 1967-71, but from 1971-77, her power would rise immensely. The seeds of the Bangladesh conflict were sown early on when Jinnah insisted that Urdu was to be the sole national language, thereby, subduing the Bengali language in East Pakistan. The catalyst of the conflict, though, was Pakistan’s first attempt at democratic elections based on adult franchise, three months before India would hold its fifth elections. The elections were called by General Yahya Khan, Ayub Khan’s successor, in the hope of drafting a new democratic constitution. In West Pakistan, the

campaign was dominated by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's, Pakistan People's Party (PPP), while in East Pakistan, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's National Awami League was the leading party. Mujibur Rahman's campaign was based on "East Pakistan's sense of victimhood, its anger at the suppression of the Bengali language and the exploitation of its rich natural resources by the military rulers of the western half of the country" (449). In December 1970, the election results were announced. The PPP had won eighty-eight out of the 144 seats in West Pakistan, while the Awami League won 167 of its 169 seats in the more populous East. Yahya Khan seemed to have announced elections hoping that Bhutto would emerge victorious and "allow him to continue as president" but this result shocked him (449). Now, he worried that since the Awami League had swept the elections, it would "insist on a federation in which the eastern wing would manage its own affairs, leaving only defence and foreign policy to the central government" (449-50). In 1966, Mujib had proposed further autonomy for East Pakistan with a six-point movement that consisted of "control over the foreign exchange its products generated," "its own currency" as well as a separate military wing for Eastern Pakistan (449-50). Furthermore, East Pakistan Muslims looked upon their West Pakistan counterparts as the "predatory foreign ruling classes," who had dismissed their language, drained the agricultural produce to "feed the western sector," discriminated against them, and had inadequately represented Bengalis "in the upper echelons of the Pakistani bureaucracy, judiciary, and army" (450). By the time of the elections of 1970, "the politically-minded" East Bengali had become "allergic to a central authority located a thousand miles" away separated by India (450). Another spin to this struggle revolved around the Hindu minority in East Pakistan who dominated the professional elite. West Pakistan elite feared that "if Mujib's Awami League came to form the government, "the constitution to be adopted by them will have Hindu iron hand in it" (450). After election results were declared, both Yahya

Khan and Bhutto held separate meetings with Mujib, but Mujib was adamant about establishing a federation. This propelled Yahya Khan to “postpone the convening of the national assembly” and led the Awami League to call for “an indefinite general strike” in which “shops, offices, and even railroads and airports” came to a halt (450). Sheikh Mujibur Rahman’s historical and electrifying 7<sup>th</sup> March speech appealed for the lifting of martial law and urged East Pakistanis that “this time the struggle is for our independence” (Speech).

The tensions had finally reached a boiling point. Military reinforcements were sent from the Western sector to the main port in the East, Chittagong, which led to frequent daily “clashes between the police and demonstrators” (450-51). Mujib and his Awami League had an abundance of support from Dacca University. In order to quell this rising support, between March 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>, a “parade of tanks rolled onto the campus, fir[ed] on the dormitories,” and “students were rounded up, shot, and pushed into graves hastily dug and bulldozed over by tanks” (451). Local newspapers and politicians were targeted by the army. In addition, in an act of escalation, Mujibur Rahman was taken to a secret location in West Pakistan after being forcefully arrested (451). The genocide by the Pakistan Army had become evident with the army’s violence spreading to the countryside, “seeking to stamp out any sign of rebellion” (451). Dissension was evident and numerous troops from East Pakistan mutinied, one soldier even announcing on radio the establishment of the ‘Independent People’s Republic of Bangladesh.’ In order to retaliate against these guerrillas, “the army raised bands of local loyalists, called Razakars, who put the claims of religion—and hence of a united Pakistan—above those of language” (451). Fighting continued in the next few months between the rebels and the army and caused massive destruction. “A World Bank team visiting East Pakistan found a ‘general destruction of property in cities, towns, and villages,’ leading to an ‘all-pervasive fear’ among



the population” (452). The 1971 Bangladesh genocide, as it became known later, witnessed approximately 3 million East Pakistanis murdered and about 300,000 women raped. The civil war had propelled Bangladeshis to leave and cross the border as refugees to India. In the matter of nine months, more than 8 million East Pakistanis sought refuge in India. India’s central government had accepted responsibility for the well-being of the refugees and pursued an ‘open door’ policy. India had been taking “a very keen interest in the future of what was already being referred to in secret official communications as the ‘struggle for Bangladesh’” (452). Along with providing sanctuary, India secretly trained Bengali guerrillas known as the ‘Mukti Bahini’ (Liberation Forces). Around 20,000 guerillas were trained and who included “regular officers and soldiers of the once united Pakistan army, plus younger volunteers learning how to use light arms” (453). An escalation of domestic tensions had resulted into an outright military genocide of the Bengalis and the refugee crisis was threatening to involve India in this conflict as well.

Another interesting aspect to this liberation struggle surrounded alliances and the atmosphere in a Cold War world. Chinese Prime Minister, Chou En-Lai, conveyed to Yahya Khan “deploring the ‘gross interference’ by India in the ‘internal problems’ of Pakistan” and assured Khan that ““should the Indian expansionists dare to launch an aggression against Pakistan, the Chinese Government and people will, as always, support the Pakistan Government and people in their struggle to safeguard state sovereignty and national independence” (453). At the same time, Indian foreign ministry began to correspond with Europe and Africa trying to garner support. Indira Gandhi “wrote to world leaders urging them to rein in the Pakistani army.” In July 1971, Henry Kissinger met Gandhi in New Delhi, where “he was acquainted for the first time with ‘the intensity of feelings on the East Bengal issue.’” The influx of refugees had placed a great burden on India and therefore, it was asking the United States “to press such a

settlement on the military rulers of West Pakistan” (454). Pakistan’s alliance with the US and India’s strained relations were evident with America’s inaction. Another aspect to consider that involved the United States in this conflict is explored in *The Blood Telegram: Nixon, Kissinger, and a Forgotten Genocide* by Gary J. Bess. One of President Richard Nixon’s greatest achievements was the reopening of diplomatic relations between US and China, but the backdrop of the circumstances was unpleasant. After his visit with Indira Gandhi, “Kissinger proceeded to Islamabad, and from there—in secret—to the Chinese capital, Peking” because Pakistan “had brokered this breaking of the ice between two countries long hostile to each other” (454). Yahya Khan had a cordial relation with both Chou Enlai and Nixon and so, he was serving as the middleman. Because Pakistan was supporting US-China relations and was a strategic partner of America in the Cold War, the United States was supporting the military dictatorship. Archer Blood, America’s Consul General of Dacca, condemned the US government in his famous ‘Blood Telegram.’ He criticized that “our government has failed to denounce the suppression of democracy” and has “evidenced what many will call moral bankruptcy,” but have consciously “chosen not to intervene” (Blood Telegram). It was signed by several other members of the consulate and is considered one of the greatest acts of dissent by America’s foreign consulate against its own government. Ironically, the Pakistan’s dictatorship alliance with the democratic US meant that the largest democracy on earth would ally itself with the communist USSR—quite unusual in the Cold War era. By July 1971, “the axes of alliance on the subcontinent were quite clear: on the one side, there was (West) Pakistan with China and the United States; on the other, (East) Pakistan with India and the Soviet Union” (456). Indira Gandhi travelled in September to the Soviet Union, and subsequently, “visited a series of western cities, ending in the capital of the Free World” highlighting the Bangladesh crisis (456). As she proclaimed to the National

Press Club in Washington, this was “not a civil war, in the ordinary sense of the word; it is a genocidal punishment of civilians for having voted democratically.” It is the “suppression of democracy” that is the “original cause of all the trouble in Pakistan,” and if “democracy is good for you [U.S.], it is good for us in India, and it is good for the people of East Bengal” (456).

When Indira Gandhi was traveling abroad denouncing this tragedy and requesting for assistance, the conditions in the subcontinent worsened. Pakistan’s domestic conflict was threatening to drag India to another war, and India remained vigilant. Over the next few months, the Indian military prepared in case of war. Since the humiliating defeat to China and the 1965 war with Pakistan, India had been strengthening their military might over the previous decade. India had formed a foreign intelligence agency with the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), and had further “augmented their equipment, modernized their organization, and laid the foundations of an indigenous weapons industry,” (457). In a famous incident, when Indira Gandhi asked the chief of staff Sam Manekshaw if India was ready for war with Pakistan in April 1971, he disagreed and even offered to resign. Ultimately, he asked for time for the Army to prepare and the monsoon season to end in order to become war ready and train the Mukti Bahini guerilla forces. Indira Gandhi agreed and by the end of the year, India was ready. On the other hand, “the morale of the Pakistan army had been deeply affected by the civil war, by the defection of Bengali officers, and by having to fight people presumed to be one’s own” (457). After a year of uneasiness, finally, the “weaker side sought to seize the initiative” and on 3 December, Pakistani bombers attacked airfields along the western border, and “simultaneously, seven regiments of artillery attacked positions in Kashmir” (457). In the next few days, India “retaliated with a series of air strikes,” “answered back on ground” in Punjab and Kashmir,” and “the navy saw action for the first time, moving toward Karachi” (457). Pakistan’s invasion of

the western front “provided a perfect excuse for India to move its troops and tanks across the border into East Pakistan, turning a shadowy struggle into an open one.” Finally, on 6<sup>th</sup> December, India officially recognized the Provisional Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh (457). In Mujibur Rahman’s absence, Syed Nazrul Islam served as acting president of the new state, with a full cabinet. Within ten days, India had gained an upper hand and on 13 December, the Indian Army bombed East Pakistan’s Governor General, AAK Niazi’s house. Although Yahya Khan had advised Niazi to “lay down arms” since ““further resistance is not humanely possible,”” General Niazi waited (459). There was some hope that the United States would intervene and support Pakistan but that “threat was idle” since the US was already “tied down in Vietnam” and “could scarcely jump into another war, which might—given the Indo-Soviet Treaty—get horribly out of hand” (459). General Niazi finally admitted defeat and on 16 December, now celebrated as ‘Victory Day of Bangladesh,’ Lieutenant General J.S. Aurora of the Indian army’s Eastern Command flew into Dacca to accept a signed instrument of surrender and take command of 90,000 Pakistani prisoners of war. Later that evening, Indira Gandhi announced in the Lok Sabha ‘Dacca is now the free capital of a free country’” (459).

The war had lasted 13 days. India had lost 42 aircrafts, 81 tanks, and accumulated around 4,000 casualties compared to Pakistan’s 86 aircrafts, 226 tanks, 9,000 soldiers, 25,000 other casualties, and about 93,000 prisoners of war. Indians were ecstatic and a publication even “hailed it as ‘India’s first military victory in centuries,’ meaning here not India the nation, but India the land mass and civilization” (461). Over the past millennium, India had been invaded by the Delhi Sultanate, the Mughal Empire, the British Empire, and China and now, “Indians could at last savour the sweet smell of military success” (461). On the other hand, a newspaper in Lahore claimed that ‘today the entire nation [Pakistan] weeps tears of blood since “today for

the first time in 1,000 years Hindus have won a victory over Muslims” (461). Apart from the brave soldiers, the “credit for victory” was bestowed upon a “single specific politician—the prime minister” (461). Indira Gandhi was widely “admired for standing up for the bullying of the United States, and for so coolly planning the dismemberment of the enemy” (461). Her popularity rose immensely as the “men of her party [went] overboard in their salutations,” and even “opposition politicians [spoke] of her as Durga, the all-conquering goddess of Hindu mythology” (461). India’s “self-esteem and the image in the world improved considerably” and RSS’s K.R. Malkani described “1971 as a ‘watershed in the political evolution of India’” (461). For the first twenty five years, both India and Pakistan were developing their identity but after the Bangladesh Liberation War, India had established its claim as a regional power while Pakistan had been fragmented into two.

Although India had won the war without any question, it did not have as much success in the post-war negotiations. After the war, President Yahya Khan resigned after tumultuous reaction in Pakistan and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto became the next President. In January 1972, Pakistan released Mujibur Rahman back to Bangladesh, completing Bangladesh’s Liberation Struggle. India invited Bhutto to the “old imperial summer capital of Simla, in the last week of June 1972” for negotiations (464). Several members of his staff accompanied Bhutto, along with his daughter and future Prime Minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto. Going into the negotiations, India had an upper hand. India had the command of 93,000 Pakistani prisoners and had captured about 5,795 square miles of land in the Western front. While the “Indians wanted a comprehensive treaty to settle all outstanding problems (including Kashmir), the Pakistanis preferred a piece-meal approach” (464). India failed to utilize its advantage it had gained after winning the war. In Shimla, “at a private meeting Bhutto told Mrs. Gandhi that he could not go

back to his people ‘empty-handed’” and so, the “Pakistanis bargained hard” (464). This was evident in the final agreement—the “Indians wanted a ‘no-war pact,’ but they had to settle for a mutual ‘renunciation of force,’ Indians asked for a ‘treaty,’ what they finally got was an ‘agreement’” (464). On the Kashmir issue, the two nations had already fought twice, and a U.N. resolution on a referendum had never been implemented. This was India’s chance to resolve this issue for once and all. Ultimately, “India said they could wait for a more propitious moment to solve the dispute over Kashmir, but asked for an agreement that the ‘line of control shall be respected by both sides’” (464). It has been said that in a private conversation, Bhutto had reassured Indira Gandhi that after his “position was more secure, he would persuade his people to accept conversion of the line of control into the international border” (464). In addition, “Bhutto successfully pressed a qualification: ‘Without prejudice to the recognized position of either side.’”(464). Still, although a major resolution was not accomplished, a couple of important decisions were taken at the meeting. At the “insistence of the Indians, a clause was added stating that the two countries would settle all their differences ‘by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations or by any other peaceful means mutually agreed upon’—this, in theory, would rule out third-party mediation or the instigation of violence in Kashmir” (464). Furthermore, the cease-fire line was converted to the ‘line of control’ (LOC). As a measure of goodwill, India returned the captured land and 90,000 prisoners of war, who had been fed and taken care of for the last few months. The agreement also resumed relations between the two nations and stated to convene again on the Kashmir issue in the near future. On 3 July, the Shimla agreement was signed, but the future meeting on Kashmir did not happen, the LOC has yet to be made the international border, and in 1999, the two nations went to war again in Kargil

(nuclear stand-off). All in all, from the Indian point of view, although the 1971 Indo-Pak war was seen as success the Shimla conference was perceived as a lost opportunity.

India went to war three times in a space of nine years against China and Pakistan. While the 1950s sowed the seeds for India's democracy and future economic success, the 1960s was a time of uncertainty. Nehru had passed away, India was defeated by China, and the nation was suffering from an agrarian crisis. The sheen of the independence movement was vanished. In this period, the morale boost provided by Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1965 and Bangladesh's liberation under Indira Gandhi lifted India's spirit. Indira Gandhi provided Congress and the people of India with a new image and hope. This was a start of a new era. Before moving on to the next phase in India's development, there are a few questions that need to be addressed pertaining to the survival of these two nations at this juncture of their histories. What did the creation of Bangladesh mean for Pakistan's identity? Through their histories of constant animosity and domestic troubles, how do both of these countries still manage to survive? And lastly, how does the role of the United States in this conflict reflect on their foreign policy and identity? The events of 1971 seem to offer an answer to all three of these questions. Pakistan was created on the basis of the two-nation theory. The two-nation theory held that the Indian subcontinent is not one country, but actually a combination of two nations—one for Hindus and one for Muslims. In a history of communal crisis in the subcontinent, the substantial minority Muslims feared the majority Hindu rule and subsequently, Pakistan was created on the name of religion. The civil war between East and West Pakistan, though, contradicts the two-nation theory. One of the main oppositions to West Pakistan rule was the denial of the Bengali language in favor of Urdu. Eventually, it was a distinctive ethnicity of the Bengalis, a different language in Bengali, and the geographic separation across India that would lead to the division of

Pakistan. By 1971, India's secular identity was secure, but the two-nation theory, which formed the idea of Pakistan, began to cast doubts. Early on, India was not given a chance by the western world who claimed that Pakistan is a more practical idea. Yet, India held on in the early years, did not Balkanize, and rather, created a homogenous national identity based on diversity and rights for all. On the other hand, Pakistan has suffered due to political instability and military coups. Still, Pakistan survives. In *Tinderbox: The Past and Future of Pakistan*, Indian journalist, MJ Akbar describes Pakistan as a 'jelly state.' Due to its army and other institutions, Akbar states that Pakistan will not disappear and melt like butter. Rather, it will survive but suffer from bouts of instability like a jelly. In an interview, he concludes that 'the idea of India is stronger than the Indian and the idea of Pakistan is weaker than the Pakistani' (MJ Akbar interview). On a separate note, the role of the United States in the lead up to 1971 is a curious one. Post World War-II, the United States has usually been both praised and criticized for its Cold War foreign policy. Generally, there are two criticisms for America's actions. One is that the US invades other countries without necessarily asking for their outright permission. The second criticism, which reflects the hypocrisy in the world, is when the United States has been unable to help in time of a humanitarian crisis. In either case, history shows that America has usually tried to be on the right side of the moral compass. The Bangladesh genocide crisis, though, is a major exception. As the Blood Telegram illustrates, although the US consulate in Dacca conveyed the details of the crisis to Nixon and Kissinger, America did not intervene. Not only did the US not intervene, it consciously supported the instigator of the genocide since Pakistan was supporting US-China relations. Altogether, although the US played a minor role in the 1971 Indo-Pak war itself, its intentional inaction in Bangladesh had a major impact. All in all, 1971 was a major turning point for several nations. While China-US reopened relations,



Bangladesh celebrated its independence after suffering a brutal genocide, India gained an international image, and Pakistan arguably witnessed its nadir after the dismemberment of their nation. In the next part of the series, the Emergency, India's only taint on democracy, will be discussed and the series will conclude with a detailed reflection on 'Why India Survives?'